

QUESTION RE "GRACE FOR GRACE"

by Willis E. Bishop

John 1:16" "And of His fullness have we all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

There are two ways that verse has been interpreted -- they can't both be correct, but either one is precious. "And of His fullness have we all received" and some say "grace upon grace" -- that is, you receive grace and more grace and more grace. That is true in your life and mine. We experienced grace yesterday and we experience grace today. Grace upon grace. Or, I think it relates to verse 17, "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ," and that John is saying there was grace in the Old Testament, and we have plenty of indication of that.

For example, Moses said to the Lord, "See, thou sayest unto me, 'Bring up this people', and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, 'I know thee by name and thou hast also found grace in my sight'. Now, therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me thy way that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight and consider this nation is thy people."

There are other passages of a similar nature that indicate there was grace in the Old Testament (Exodus 33). But John is saying that the grace Christ brought is not the grace that was experienced under the law, but the grace experienced at this time is that Christ died for our sins. The Greek preposition is "anti" [pronounced "ontee"], meaning "instead of"; some say it should be translated "upon." I think it is grace in place of grace, contrasting the grace of the Old Testament with the grace of the New.

Prayer: Our Heavenly Father, we thank You for the witness of this portion of Scripture to our Lord, that, indeed, He is God; that He has brought grace that we need in our lives; and that in connection with those who worked with Him, they knew full well to speak this word of Him. Then, our Father, as we go out into the world today, make us mindful of the fact that there are those out there who do not know the Lord; who do not love Him; do not serve Him. May they see in us the way Christians ought to live and hear from our lips a testimony of His grace toward us, in His precious name. Amen.

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